

Returning Home After a FLOOD

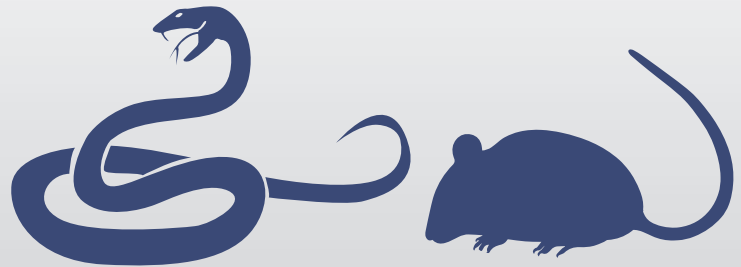
Cleaning Your Home

- ❑ **Return home** only when officials have declared the area **safe**.
- ❑ Before entering your home, **look outside for loose power lines**, damaged gas lines, foundation cracks or other damage.
- ❑ **If you smell natural or propane gas** or hear a hissing noise, **leave immediately** and call the fire department.
- ❑ **If power lines are down** outside your home, **do not step in puddles** or standing water.
- ❑ Materials such as cleaning products, paint, batteries, contaminated fuel and damaged fuel containers are hazardous. **Check with local authorities for assistance with disposal** to avoid risk.
- ❑ During cleanup, **wear protective clothing**, including **rubber gloves** and **rubber boots**.



First Inspection

- ❑ If possible, **leave children and pets with a relative** or friend. If not, keep them away from hazards and floodwater.
- ❑ **Beware of rodents, snakes, insects and other animals** that may be on your property or **in your home**.



- ❑ If your home was flooded, assume it is contaminated with mold. **Mold increases health risks for those with asthma**, allergies or other breathing conditions.
- ❑ **Open doors and windows**. Let the house air out before staying inside for any length of time if the house was closed for more than 48 hours.
- ❑ Turn the main electrical power and water systems off until you or a professional can ensure that they are safe. **NEVER turn the power on or off**, or use an electrical tool or appliance **while standing in water**.
- ❑ **Check the ceiling and floor for signs of sagging**. Water may be trapped in the ceiling and floors may be unsafe to walk on.



POST STORM CLEANUP

After a storm has passed, failure to remove contaminated materials from your home can cause health risks. To help prevent the spread of diseases that can cause illness it is important to wash your hands often, especially during cleanup efforts after a storm. Debris, floodwater and other remnants of the storm may harbor disease-causing bacteria and viruses.

MOLD

- Remove and throw away all porous items that cannot be thoroughly cleaned and dried quickly within 24-48 hours, including:
 - o carpeting and carpet padding
 - o upholstery and wallpaper
 - o drywall, floor and ceiling tiles, and insulation material
 - o some clothing, leather, paper, wood, and food
- Wear personal protective equipment, including: an N-95 respirator (hardware stores usually sell them), goggles, gloves, long pants, long-sleeved shirt, and work boots/shoes
- Open doors and windows
- Use fans to dry out the building
- Store wet items outside the home until insurance claims can be filed
- Control entry of additional moisture by fixing leaks in roofs, walls, or plumbing
- Prevent mold growth, clean wet items and surfaces with detergent and water
- Remove mold from small areas with a solution of 1 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water
 - o Use a stiff brush on rough surface materials like concrete
 - o Never mix bleach or products containing bleach with ammonia or products containing ammonia
 - o Read the label on any product to see what it contains
 - o Open windows and doors to provide fresh air

FOOD

- Discard any food that has come into contact with floodwater
- For fruit and vegetables that did not come into contact with floodwater, wash with only water that is safe to drink before eating
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. If the doors remain closed, a refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours, a freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours, while a half full freezer will keep the temperature for about 24 hours
- Do not attempt to cook and eat meat, poultry, fish or eggs that have been above 40°F for 2 hours or more. Discard these products as they can be contaminated with bacteria and can lead to foodborne illness

